

NSC BRIEFING

15 January 1958

VENEZUELA

- I. Perez' tenure now appears to depend on the outcome of the power struggle among the military.
 - A. Armed forces were probably responsible for the shakeup in the cabinet on 10 January.
 - B. Perez, however, *appears to have temporarily reassorted* ~~is now evidently trying to reassert~~ his authority.
 1. He has taken personal charge of the defense ministry.
 2. He has appointed a civilian Perez Vivas, an apparently staunch supporter and a relative, to ministry of interior.
- II. The crisis in Venezuela seems likely to continue for an extended period.
 - A. Disunity continues in the armed forces.
 - B. Perez seems determined to retain power.
 - C. Formerly passive civilian opposition may seek to take advantage of military discord. This could touch off serious violence.
 1. There have been several public demonstrations.

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